

publication—shall we lay all the obligations of the constitution upon them and deny them its privileges? Having decided that they were far enough under the constitution to be shot as traitors, but not far enough under to enjoy the tariff, should we promise them self government when they were ready for it, or pacify them as Russia pacified Poland?

And the nation looked to Mr. Beveridge for the word of a promising man, young enough to dare, wise enough to know the law and brave enough to face the growing tendency to aggression. Words can not picture the hope with which American citizens of all parties looked forward to the Beveridge declaration. It was believed he would make such report as would recall the nation to McKinley's original stand. He would not be interviewed. He would give no hint of his attitude. He would not foreshadow by so much as suggestion what had been the result of his long and careful study of the Filipino.

And when he rose in the senate and made his one big speech it was special pleading from beginning to end. He coined that perilous doctrine that "there is an institutional law above all constitutional law"—and by his discovery, by his new nostrum, he found for the aggressionists—and the United States of America has lost more in blood, treasure and prestige in fifteen years than Spain lost in two hundred. We have been as cruel as Weyler and as ineffective. Our commercial policy has been as bad as our military, and our sense of human right and wrong has been worse than both together. And it is the logical inescapable result of the policy, that Albert J. Beveridge, more than any other man living or dead, fixed on this nation. Nothing better was possible, starting from that "institutional" abortion.

But it paid him. Oh, yes. He went back to the senate—for his last term, by the way. And the habit of shifting for advantage, of getting his pay and his principles from the same office, led him to swallow Hanly; led him to stand still and see the Democrats walloping the wadding out of the party in Indiana; led him to condone the offenses and forget the foolishness of his party friends till the Democrats administered that most thorough and best deserved beating to Republicanism "from Arisnook to San Diego; from Key West to Puget Sound."

A. J. Beveridge is not the man to prate political honesty. He could have been President of the United States if he had had the courage of a patriot when he came home from the Philippines. He couldn't get mentioned among those present now.

#### CHANGE FOR THE BETTER.

President Wiltsoe sends me a copy of a letter from the Secretary of the Interior which contains about as much good cheer as any man is entitled to this far from Christmas. The cause of that comfort lies in the fact that educational institutions in this United States finally recognize the necessity for teaching agriculture, trades and domestic science to the young men and the young women who are spending father's money in an effort to prepare for their "battle with the world."

"There is a constant and rapidly increasing demand for teachers of agriculture, domestic science, and industries and trades in the high schools in all parts of the country," says the honorable secretary. "The demand is greater for teachers of one subject in one part of the country, and for another subject in other parts. But apparently the supply is not equal to the demand in any section. For this reason many schools undertake to have work in these subjects done by teachers who are not prepared, and the results are far from satisfactory. Teachers for these subjects should be

prepared in the colleges of agriculture and mechanical arts."

All of which shows that ignorance of Latin is not so much of a disgrace now as it once was.

The letter, the condition which inspired it, and President Wiltsoe's preparedness all point to a better condition than has existed in all the past. Young men are less generally devoted to a life work in which they can keep their hands white. Young women are losing their scorn of cooking, their pride in ignorance of how to conduct a home. It means that there is less yearning for idleness and luxury; less tendency to vapidity, vanity and vice. It means a better fibre in the youth of America, since the demand for teaching in productive activities is general over all the country. No more encouraging note has been encountered.

In the future there will be more pride in handicraft, more ambition to excel in useful achievement, more devotion to and more love of good work. It means a more useful race; a more normal man and a more desirable woman. It means better living, and less cost. It means a decrease in dinners to puppy dogs, and an increase in the manufacture of furniture by sons of the rich. It means less wasting of inherited money, and more development of natural resources. It means more shame for idleness, more pride in usefulness, more apology for idleness and more proof of service.

Of course Rome wasn't made in a day, and the whole social scheme is not reconstructed because a Secretary of the Interior tells the Agricultural College of Utah that more young men and young women trained in useful occupations are needed. But, believe me, it is a long step in the right direction—and the forward movement is not a fad, but the relentless tendency of a nation.

Mankind is going to be more worth while.

Maybe money is tight. But it isn't a contagion. You don't have to get that way just because money did. And if you don't, money won't be.

#### BAD BOY, GOOD MAN.

Read me this riddle, will you?

Twenty years ago there was a band of bad boys up about Division street in Chicago; and the very worst boy in the lot was a diminutive demon who shall be called Otho, because that is not his name. They stole oranges from the Italian, candy from the confectioner, bread from the baker, and fruit from the farmers. They stole empty bottles and threw them at driftwood in the river. They stole pickets off the fences and used them for baseball bats. They stole things they didn't need—just for the fun of stealing.

They ran away from church and played hooky from school. They rolled empty store boxes and detached outhouses into the middle of the street and burned them in celebration of—anything. They broke windows, and drove away unhitched horses. They put kittens in the cable slot, and tied dogs to the running gear of the drawbridges. They put diamond dyes in the water mains, and stale beer in the milk cans. There was absolutely no cussedness they did not indulge.

Any man prophesying the gallows for the lot of them would have been accused of the palpable, the evident. And Otho was the king of the crowd.

Well, the other day, I ran across Otho at the desk of one of Utah's biggest commercial houses, in a position of the very greatest trust, and discharging every duty with absolute efficiency. He is married to a beautiful and excellent woman, and has healthy and happy children. He hasn't a bad habit, except that he cheers at the baseball game, nor a flaw in his loyalty, beyond a desire to some day visit Chicago's North Side, and smell again the aroma of Goose Island's industries. He is about as good and useful a type of American citizenship as I know.

Now, read me that riddle—will you?

#### WHAT ARE YOU READING?

It is a sad world, my masters. Here are the names of the six books featured as the "best sellers" for the last calendar month:

The Amateur Gentleman,  
The Heart of the Hills,  
The Mischief Maker,  
The Parasite,  
The Vallents of Virginia,  
The Bride's Hero.

I have read all of them but one, and am darned if I will go farther even in so necessary a research. For it is necessary. If that six is a measure of local literary—or general literary—appreciation, one ought to know the reason why. And I can't find the reason. The Amateur Gentleman is much the best of the lot. It has fancy, creation, and an agreeable style of narration. There is some adventure—palpable as pollywogs in the matter of termination; and there is the finish—as inevitable as anything in the gospel according to Laura Jean Libby. It isn't a bad story, as stories go. But it distinctly is not worth while. There isn't a new thought, or a new method, or a new situation. And there isn't a moral or a lesson or any warrant from the taproom tussle in the first chapter to the terminal triumph of the hero in the last.

And if that is true of the best of the best sellers, what shall be said of the rest? There is no profit in them. They are cheap and tawdry and illogical; they are slapped together in evident haste; they

It is plain to be seen at a glance  
That senators won't have a chance,  
And the best politicians  
Will run like the dickens  
When Washington women wear pants.

make no possible account of nature—human or otherwise. It is appalling to reflect on the total wasted hours represented by the reading which must mark this as the six best sellers. What days, weeks, months and ages must be computed when one reflects that the decision here is pretty close to the decision of the nation. What length of human life represented in absolute waste, in deteriorating of brain issues, in spoiling of taste and judgment, in weakening of the fibre of character in the influence of so much reading of such poor stuff? I find it—actually—more difficult to condemn book badness than it was before. And if it have a weakening effect on my ancient and seasoned fibre, what shall be the damage to the Fair Young Thing, or to the Hopeful Youth whose preference makes up the majority vote?

Is it good to reply that these are the best books now offered? Maybe that is true. But there still remain the sound old books. And while no gambler I am willing to bet that the people whose purchases made these the six best sellers never read the good things in English literature. They never read translations from the good in other tongues. They couldn't, or they wouldn't have helped this double triumvirate of trash to the terrible eminence of the advertisement.

Is it enough to say the readers of this age must have contemporaneous stuff? No. They better not read than read to their hurt. They actually would better work; better hoe corn, or cultivate flowers, or wash the woodwork, or mix mud and lay a cement walk. Of course they don't want to be idle—and they should not be. The natural urge impels them. But in a world not completely made, so pathetic in its pleading for help in arriving where God may call it Good, it is a misfortune amounting to calamity when books like these can take up ten thousand holy hours of human life.

Read the Bible. Read Shakespeare. Read Byron's Child Harold. Read Hawthorne. Read The Cross of Berny. Read Stevenson, or the early prose of Kipling—like The Man Who Would Be King.

Read anything but the Six Best Sellers.